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# THE LIFE STORY

OF

# FINLAY BOOTH

BY

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# INTRODUCTION.

THIS is not a work of literary effort. We claim no merit for anything in the way of book-writing in this life sketch. This is neither a treatise, nor a discourse, nor a thesis; it is simply a story of actual experience with the sad features inseparable from suffering and loss.

Nearly all the data of the book have been received from the lips of the subject of the work himself, and we have grouped and arranged these as you find them within.

Our first acquaintance with the subject of this tale goes back to about four years ago, and when our eyes first beheld him a wave of sympathy swept in upon us which has taken a crystallized form in this work.

From a sympathetic motive the suggestion was made that the story of his life should be presented in book form. The thought lodged in his mind, and he finally came with the request to undertake the task. Consent was given with great reluctance, as pastoral duties demanded all time and energy at our disposal.

We sincerely hope that the reader may get some inspiration from these pages in looking at the indomitable perseverance and noble independence of this man, while under the most heartrending and discouraging circumstances. Many men not one-half as badly maimed would be in the poorhouse. If this man can surmount such obstacles, why should any one lack courage in the world's great battle?

How true are the words of Burns:

"Though losses and crosses be
Lessons right severe,
There's wit there, you'll get there,
Y. find no other where."

HAMILTON WIGLE.

WINNIPEG, May, 1900.

WHAT IS LEFT OF FINLAY BOOTH

# FINLAY BOOTH.

## CHAPTER I.

### *EARLY DAYS.*

"We live in deeds, not years,
In thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart-throbs.
He lives most who thinks most,
Feels the noblest, acts the best."

—*Bailey.*

FINLAY BOOTH, the subject of this sketch, was not always thus. The Great Father had been as generous to him as to any of His children, and had started him out in life with a perfect outfit of bodily members. This mutilated form is the product of one of the terrible tragedies in the early settlement of the Great West. Finlay's parents came from Leitrim, Ireland, in the year 1845, and settled on a farm near the town of Waterloo, Shefford County, Province of Quebec. From there, in the year

1849, they moved to Wallace, in the County of Perth, Province of Ontario, where they remained till the year 1861.

About that time a relative from Rhode Island came to visit the Booths, and persuaded them to leave Ontario and go over and take employment in the American cotton factories. The venture was made with the hope of securing better wages, and thus providing a surer means of supporting the large family.

Hills far away looked *green,* and things at home looked *blue,* but "fortune did not favor the brave" that time, for the Civil War had broken out, and all the large factories had shut down. Fortunately, they still held their land in Perth, Ontario, and, after an experiment of six years in the States, they returned to the old Canadian home.

Finlay was born on the 24th of June, 1853, On that birthday in June—nature's month of jubilee, when old Ontario is at her best, when earth and sky celebrate their wedding day—there was no prophetic hint that those round limbs and that plump face would be so wrenched and torn. Indeed, it seems incredible that there can be forces in the earth, such as at one moment can be engaged in carving and shaping such delicate features, and at

another could be engaged in tearing up that finely-constructed work in a most ruthless manner.

The home, like many others in those parts at that day, did not roll in wealth and luxury. They endured all the privations common to early settlers. In those pioneer days the red deer could be seen in dozens. The wolves made the night hideous by their hungry howlings, and had to be kept from the houses and barns by burning log heaps and smudges.

When going to and fro among the neighbors at night the traveller found it necessary to carry burning cedar splinters to keep the wolves away.

Finlay's father cut the first road into the township, and roofed his first log shanty with elm bark.

The nearest town was twelve miles distant, and when a new consignment of flour was needed, the mother would thresh out the sheaves of wheat over the head of a barrel, clean it by the aid of the wind, and carry it on her back to get it ground, and then convey the flour back again—a distance of twenty-four miles.

In that same part of the country the young housekeepers are said to carry nothing heavier

than a milk-pail in these days, and in order to remove the stiffness from their fingers caused by crocheting, they meander over the ivory keys of a piano two hours a day. What a change! What memorials we ought to raise to those uncrowned heroes and heroines of bygone days!

During the harvest time the father used to go down near Brantford and Galt, the better settled parts, and cut the crops with his cradle to earn a little extra cash to furnish the larder at home.

The forests were so dense and unbroken that the settlers would often lose their way, and when any homecomer was thus overdue they would begin to blow long tin horns, which they had for dinner-calling.

The Booth family consisted of the parents and seven children—four girls and three boys. The father's name was Thomas, and the mother's name was Mary Banon.

Jane, the eldest, was born in Ireland, and when the family moved to Rhode Island she, of course, went with the others, but remained there after the rest returned to Ontario. From there she moved west to St. Paul in the year 1887, and died in that city in the year 1897. The other six children were born in Canada.

Mary Ann, the second daughter, and the only surviving one, married W. C. Cowan, a farmer, near Carman, Manitoba. Mrs. Cowan is a woman of high repute, and has a family of which she has great reason to be proud.

Eliza, the third daughter, married William Waugh, and came west and settled at Boissevain, Manitoba, where she died in July, 1897.

Payton, the next child and eldest son, came west with the family to Manitoba, but soon after went south to St. Paul, where he died in March, 1890.

Finlay, the next in order, is the subject of our sketch, whose career we will give a little later.

Johnston, the third son, separated from the rest of the family at Black River Falls, Wisconsin, when they were on their way to the West. He remained there but a short time, and then returned to Bruce County, Ontario, and married. In 1881 he pulled up stakes again and, retracing his steps, came west and settled near Carman, Manitoba, where he is farming at the present time.

John, the youngest boy, came out when the family moved west, and at the time of Finlay's accident was in the employ of Dr. Schultz, of Winnipeg. At this time their sister Eliza was

also in the employ of Dr. Schultz. John then followed the family to the Boyne River, where they had settled, and remained at home till his mother died. He then found his way back to Winnipeg, and for many years was the head shipper in Westbrook's implement firm. He is now engaged with James Robertson, wholesale hardware merchant, Winnipeg.

Martha, the youngest of the family, married John Sargent, who was night-watchman at the river crossing. They also moved out to the Boyne settlement, where she died in October, 1894.

FINLAY AS HE IS SEEN TO DAY

## CHAPTER II.

### *TO THE WEST.*

We have dealt little with our hero since we recorded his birth in Eastern Canada. He had grown to be quite a young man before he left Ontario, and had performed a noble part in hewing out the new home. Many forest giants had yielded to the strength of those hands which have long since crumbled to dust.

When the first military expedition was sent to the North-West, an old neighbor, W—— C——, who enlisted from the Military School and took part in the Rebellion of 1870, sent back such glowing accounts of the country that the Booths were induced to try the "West."

The farm and loose property were disposed of, and the start was made on June 5th, 1871. All land trips were then made across the States, and the only routes open were by all land, or steamer to Milwaukee, and the rest by land. A tenting wagon was improvised, and, crossing at Sarnia, they took the water route to Milwaukee, from whence they drove to Winnipeg. It took them fifty-two days to

cover the distance from Perth County to Fort Garry.

Settlements were very sparse in Minnesota at that date, and Grand Forks was a mere hamlet of less than a dozen houses. Winnipeg, he says, did not possess more than one thousand population, and the only hotel of importance was the Davis House. Finlay was eighteen years of age when he reached Winnipeg, and in the fall of the same year the family removed to the Boyne settlement and took up land four miles from where the town of Carman now stands.

The first part of our hero's life is folded up in the history previously given, in the account of his home and family.

Finlay was always a steady and dutiful boy. At the age of sixteen he joined the British-American Order of Good Templars and lived up to his pledges.

His parents taught him one of the first principles of life—industry—and he has faithfully practised it ever since. He was not long in Winnipeg till he secured work in the brickyard of Dr. Schultz. In a very short time, Finlay claims, he gained the acquaintance of the great majority of the people in the city.

In the fall of the year Finlay's parents

secured land for settlement, and prepared to leave the city for the new prairie home.

Among the necessary requirements of the early settler none perhaps superseded that historic animal which in plain English we call a cow. The Booths knew how indispensable this domestic servant was, and having procured one, she had to be transferred to the farm with the *rest* of the *family*. They all left the city on November 27th, 1871, and, while the others drove along in the wagon, Finlay led the cow.

The first evening they only got as far as Headingly, where they spent the night at the home of Richard Salter. The following night they camped out at Stinking River, and the next morning started for the Boyne settlement.

## CHAPTER III.

### *TEMPERANCE LESSON.*

"The tissue of the life to be
We weave in colors all our own,
And in the field of destiny
We reap what we have sown."

—*Whittier.*

THAT memorable day, November 29th, broke in most beautifully upon the Western plains. We do love beautiful November mornings here, when the sun seems to shine through a silver sheen of crisp frosty air, when every vestige of vegetation is numb with cold and the whole domain is flooded with light; it seems just as if the earth had been suddenly tipped into the bosom of the sun. There is a fulness of light by day and night in these clear skies, the like of which we have not witnessed in any other part of Canada.

As the day advanced it became suddenly colder; in fact, a storm was rapidly brewing (of which we shall deal more fully later on) and the travellers found it necessary to push on with greater speed.

Finlay, feeling the sudden chill, ate a cold lunch hastily and started on without any rest, leaving the others quite a distance behind. When the party overtook Finlay he had reached what was called the " Potato Swamp," on the old Missouri Trail. His brother, Payton, offered to exchange places with him here, but the offer was declined on the ground that he was then too hot to get in the wagon and ride, and would be safer in walking on with his quadruped companion.

It should be noted here that Payton, who had a single rig when he offered his brother a ride, was a little in advance of the wagon, he having pushed on with the intention of going ahead to prepare the house for the whole party. After Payton drove off, the rear-guard of the party caught up to Finlay, and the father was astonished to see him still walking.

Here, on a quiet page in the centre of this book, we record the simple yet misguided act that resulted in the awful tragedy of this boy's life. The father saw the exhausted condition of his son, and, with none but the kindliest and tenderest motives, insisted that he should take a drink of the liquor they had brought with them. Finlay, as we have seen, was a Good Templar, and declined at once.

The father had never used it to excess, and he persuaded the lad that it could do him no harm, but was what he most needed at that moment. What a boon to mankind modern science has given when not only the fathers, but our children in the public schools, are taught that there is little or no nourishment in liquor, and when it seems to aid one part it robs another. Let us shorten the story here and simply say: Finlay took it.

That father lived to see the awful folly of his act, and with tears and heartaches he learned the dreadful lesson.

When will mankind learn the danger of trying to warm themselves at the mouth of a volcano, or of seeking to quench their thirst at the rushing Niagara?

The case before us is just another proof of the fact that stimulants do not take the place of either food or clothing. No man can lose much for body or soul who *takes* and *keeps* a pledge of teetotalism.

Who has the logic to vindicate the existence of such a human foe in our land to-day, when three-fourths of all the crime, suffering, and misery are traceable to its existence?

This earth does not merit such an insult as she has received in the thousands of drunk-

ard's graves that are digged into her bosom. I can easily imagine that the judgment will be half over when this great evil has been reckoned with.

Mr. Booth freely declares that were it not for that *one* glass he could have endured the storm and fatigue and escaped the awful mutilation he has suffered.

Our hero has expressed himself as being not only willing but *anxious* that his misfortune and ill-advised act should be made use of as a signal of warning against the use of liquor in any form. He thinks it is far safer to live without it than with it.

We do not offer any apology for taking advantage of this sad incident for ringing out the old, old warning: "Touch not, taste not, handle not" the accursed thing.

## CHAPTER IV.

### *STORM.*

THE farther we are removed from water the more difficult it is to predict the weather probabilities. Among the initial causes of atmospheric changes is the enormous evaporation from the sea, and, consequently, the more remote a district is from the sea the less distinct are the storm symptoms. Our most violent storms on the prairie are often the most sudden ones. This is not the case on the ocean or shoreland. The seaman will see the greedy gull skimming low and dipping at every wave to gather a double feed, anticipating the storm. The sharks increase in number and fierceness; the sea-fish spring out of the water at every speck floating on the waves. In the rigging the winds growl and whine as they rush up the masts and creep through the lazy, flapping canvas. The captain sees the floating pennant on the topmast, smells the electric air, and hears the slap of the sluggish wave against the side of the ship. The tars lounge lifelessly about the decks, while the wheelsman, with aching

arms, tugs at the helm. The mate looks at the glass and says: "Aha! Cap, she's a-brewin'." On the shorelands, too, Nature has run up her storm signals. The farmer sees the swallow skimming the ground to catch the hiding fly. The dove sits by the hour upon the brush heap repeating her mournful notes like a human tale of woe. The blackbird hops about the plough-boy's feet to pick the upturned grub. The sleepless owl screams all night, and the watch-dog growls and barks as if the land were full of tramps. The house-wife tires at her work, while the fretful infant in the crib refuses to be rocked to sleep. The cattle call to each other across the moor, and instinctively wander about for places of shelter. The leg-weary farmer leans against the fence corner cleaning his plough, and can hear his neighbor shouting at his stupid team; and, rubbing his hot brow with his sleeve, he mutters to himself, "This means a storm, I guess." Out upon the prairie the settler cannot conjure up so many portents of the weather. He hears no voice from the sea, nor can he feel any shore breezes. He has very little opportunity of consulting the birds; they leave us too soon to be of service long. The wild animals do not venture far upon the plains; the hollow atmosphere does

not seem to be in correspondence with any of Nature's prophets, and, when the last sheaves have been gathered and the flocks are in the corrals, the prairie seems to be the "no man's land."

The early frosts discolor every vestige of vegetation until the eye looks every way upon a vast domain of brown grass or yellow stubble fields. Then the clouds, as if grieved at the heartless desolation of the frost, cover the plain with a carpet of mealy snow. But Nature has things pretty much her own way, and does not think it necessary to make any definite announcement of her movements.

The unchained winds of the north have held sway so long over these uninhabited regions that they have not learned the courtesies of modern civilization, and give no notice or warning of their terrible bombardment. A blizzard is one of the most unexpected things in the West. It is one of the finest exhibitions of irony that the elements can produce. Up to a few hours before it bursts upon us, it often seems to be the thing that is the most remote. A blizzard does not need the cold, the black cloud, the thunder peal, the lightning flash. It is like a bomb-shell; it has all the elements of execution bound up

in itself. The day may break unusually warm and bright, and although winter has been with us a month or more, you would think Father Time had gone back to September for a day he had missed. But see! Look at that thick haze creeping stealthily over the sun, and that chill wave blowing up, that every settler learns to dread! The children run in the house, while the mother runs out, concerned perhaps about some missing one. She has been in the country long enough to guess the problem. About this time can be seen a long grey streak of cloud far away on the horizon, but moving forward, and rising every moment higher into the hazy heavens. The cattle are all sniffing the air and crowding and hooking each other about the stacks, as restless as if a prairie fire was sweeping down upon them. In haste the corral bars are put up, the stock put in the stable, and a supply of water and wood taken into the house. By this time there are fine specks of snow sifting through the air, and in about twenty minutes every track, road, and trail are so obliterated that the belated traveller realizes the first shock of horror in not being able to "keep the trail." When the clouds have deposited about an inch of snow the wind seems jealous, and begins to pick it

up from the earth and mix it with the clouds again. Every flake of snow is ground up like pulverized dust, and whirled through the air at a terrible speed; every foot of space seems to be the centre of a whirlwind; the elements are in an awful confusion. The trusty team will no longer obey the homeward instinct, but yield to the sterner law, and, turning from the whirling blast, will wander away with the storm. The farmer, bewildered by the circling currents of air, unconsciously becomes a part of the storm, and goes round and round, at the same time wandering away in the general direction of the gale.

When a blizzard is at its height, even in midday it is as dark as dusk, and so terrible is the howling, chilling blast, that it is a miracle for a man or beast to live long in it, or find a place of shelter, even at noonday. The eyes become filled with the gritty snow—fairly driven like sand into the very eyeballs—and half the time is spent gasping for breath; for though the air is plentiful, the very moment you open your mouth for it the wind snatches it all away, and takes out of the lungs every thimbleful it can find there. In this wild tornado every snow-speck seems to possess a fang to sting with, and the wrenchings of the tem-

pest overhead give out such weird screams that you fairly shudder as you imagine the air above you is filled with fiends.

No man standing on a burning deck where the licking flames climb the masts was ever in more imminent danger of death than the man upon the prairie when the volcanic eruptions of the atmosphere play havoc over the land.

There is more than one humble home on these wide prairies where the husband, or son, or father, did not reach home during the night, while the sad story is told, "They perished in the storm."

## CHAPTER V.

### *FROZEN.*

AFTER our hero had taken that fatal draught he travelled on until he came to a small bunch of willows. In this country there is no forest of any importance except along the river banks; but in some districts there are spots of shrubbery at distances ranging from ten to twenty miles apart. These bluffs, as they are called, often consist of about half an acre, more or less, of scrubby growth, ranging from ten to twenty feet in height. In times of storm these furnish valuable protection to man or beast. In these very bushes is the place where the prairie chicken will hide from its pursuer, and take refuge in time of blizzards; and if the storm should continue for several days the birds can subsist well from the buds on the branches.

How our common foes make all earth's creatures one! Here poor Finlay led his cow, and man and beast and bird lay down together in a common shelter.

Not being accustomed to stimulants, he began to feel stupid, and with Nature's demand

for food and rest, there was not energy enough left to keep back the only alternative—sleep. Had he not been under the influence of the drug, he would have been conscious of the awful danger in going to sleep, and could have fought his foes—the cold and storm and hunger—with comparative success, and could have at least warded off some of the terrible disaster that befell him that night.

Poor Booth! Here began the revenge of the laws of life when they are disregarded. The cold crept in about him, but his senses were chloroformed. No voice was then able to awaken him. There was no hand to stay the cold, and that subtle monster moved slowly, but irresistibly, upon the victim and began his woeful work. He pushed back the warm blood from the finger tips; he drove the blood from the tired feet up into the body, and sealed up the gates from the arteries to the veins, so that no more—forever—the life blood should flow out through those members; and he determined the time when those deadened limbs should fall off like sapless branches from a tree.

Not contented with this, but like a panther that seeks the warm heart-blood of its prey, the King of Cold put his paw upon the face of its victim, and, in the vain attempt to drive out

the life, distorted the features, and left those ghastly marks—marks that he will carry to the grave.

When Finlay did not turn up at the camp at about the expected time, all hands became very uneasy. Notwithstanding the storm, they determined to form a rescue party and search for him. They had already anticipated his being lost or having perished. As they groped their way along, at almost every step they called his name. Finlay says he heard them and answered; but, unfortunately, sound cannot travel in such storms any farther than the vision, and they never heard him. It is also quite probable he was too weak to reply very vigorously. He even attempted to follow them, but found it impossible.

There is a sadness about every page of this story, for at nearly every turn we can see where so much suffering could have been saved if only something *else* had happened; if only those men had happened to have found him then they could have given relief so much sooner. How many heart-aches we have in life on account of the unfulfilled "might have beens"!

When Finlay was sufficiently awakened to take in the whole situation, the party, of course,

was out of reach, having followed the river close enough to escape the danger of losing their way also. Our hero began at once to investigate his condition, and found his fingers and toes were frozen as far as the second joints. Previous to his lying down he had removed his wet socks and gloves, thus leaving his limbs very much exposed in his cold boots and mitts.

About midnight the storm broke. Here is the irony of the heavens! A few hours before all the elements seemed at war with each other: the stars were angry at the clouds, and the clouds with the earth. After the mighty battle of these elements all quieted down as before and everything was much the same, except here and there a few men or beasts lay strewn as helpless victims of the carnage where the fury of the battle was the fiercest.

What apparent mockery! Those angry stars are now nodding affectionately to each other, shaking hands with the wind, and smiling upon the glistening earth; but there still lives a warden of the plains to witness the ruin of that stern November night. By the light of the open sky the rescue party found their way back, and Finlay could see the bush that skirted the Boyne. In his terrible condition he stum-

bled along to the river, touching it at the old Grant Bridge, near the present home of Absalom Clarke.

Tired, hungry, with both hands and feet frozen, and burning with thirst, he did his best to break the ice to get a drink, but failing this, he ate snow to satisfy both hunger and thirst. By this time the frost had gone to his wrists and ankles. Cold is so much like its foe, heat, when once it attacks the flesh, the tendency is to go deeper and deeper. In a most excruciating condition he trudged his weary way along toward the new home, a distance of at least eight miles from where he was frozen. When he reached the door he presented such a spectacle, with his swollen face, that his friends were shocked.

None had slept any the past night, and great concern was felt as they anxiously awaited his footstep. When the rescue party returned the situation was unbearable. His father had determined to go himself at daybreak to search for the boy, and was in the act of saddling the horse when Finlay presented himself at the cabin door. The mother, who always penetrates the furthest into the child's troubles, was the first to discover the seriousness of the case. The moment the frozen parts came in contact

with the heat the irritation that was set up was simply unbearable. His improvised nurses were not long in setting to work to alleviate the pain, and the first application was of snow and cold water.

Instinct and experience furnish us with the best of our knowledge, and the attendants knew that nature hated extremes, and so, in order to coax the frost out, they made a compromise with him instead of challenging him with his old foe—heat. The process was very slow, but sure, and all the time and attention so far had been devoted to his hands and face. As yet it had not occurred to them that his feet might be frozen. When the attendants attempted to remove the moccasins they were horrified to find that they were actually frozen to the feet, and the limbs themselves were frozen half way to the knees.

Imagine, if you can, the long, weary, and painful process of drawing the frost out of those limbs that had been frozen numb for many hours. We have carried our poor sufferer along so far in his troubles and misfortunes, but actually his sufferings have just begun.

## CHAPTER VI.

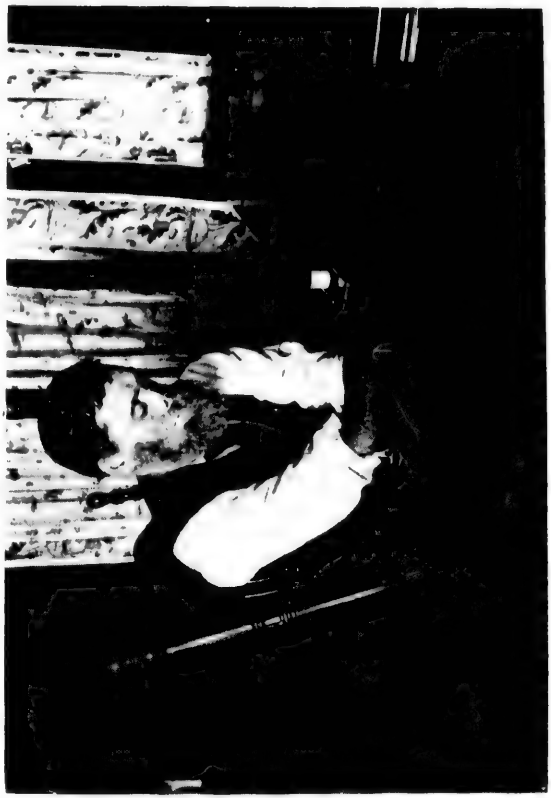
### *AMPUTATION.*

It is a difficult task by any human means to bring back life into dead matter.

Poor Finlay was very brave, and thought if it was only a matter of bearing pain he would compel his nerves to endure the torture while he would wait for his strong body to drive vitality into the frozen members.

Many weary days dragged along, while everyone looked anxiously and waited all but impatiently to see the limbs revive. There was no medical aid to be had nearer than Winnipeg, and it was finally agreed upon that Dr. Turner should be called out to examine the case. A very close inspection was made of the frozen parts, and the sound parts of the body were also examined with a view of finding if the patient would be able to stand the amputation. Everything was far worse than poor Finlay had imagined, for the long days of suffering had so weakened him that while it was certain he could not save his limbs, it was even doubtful if he could live with or without them.

The doctor told him his hands would have



FINLAY THREADING A NEEDLE

to come off. Who could imagine what a sore blow this was to him? He was young, ambitious, and full of splendid grit. It was a challenge to his spirit of independence, for it meant to him the most helpless slavery. A sharp battle set in. He had not allowed himself to entertain the thought for a moment up to this time, nor would he hear of such a proposition from anyone. How could he part with those members upon which his very life depended?

Who is there that could lose even a finger from the faithful and obedient hand without a serious sense of loss? Of all the obedient servants we possess, which never question the mandates of the mind, methinks these hands come first.

We would not expect the greatest devotee to offer a hand to his goddess. No man would sell it for a gold mine, a royal dowry, a plantation; then with what infinitely greater reluctance could a poor soul give up both hands for nothing but despair?

Scott says:

> "A child will weep a bramble's smart,
> A maid to see her sparrow part.
> . . . . . .
> But woe awaits a nation when
> She sees the tears of bearded men."

We scarcely need to stop here long enough to apologize for this poor man's tears when he discovered that they thought of dehanding him. There seemed to be no relieving feature about the sad affair. It was humiliating, at least, to be so mutilated on a couch in a lonely hut away on the western prairie, where he could not claim the glory of war, or feel that for any special act of chivalry he had sacrificed limbs or life.

Finlay rebelled; he said, "No, you shall not touch them; I will die first."

At a glance he saw himself a weather-beaten stub, whose foliage and limbs had been torn away by a ruthless tempest. He saw himself a floating ship spoiled of all its canvas and masts, and could not brook the thought of pounding like a forlorn and helpless hulk on a barren shore. He said what all human beings would say: "No, no!—a thousand no's!"

Ah! but the logic of pain is convincing; it compels the reason to consider, and forces its arbitrary conclusions upon us. If there could be said that there was any climax to the pain, it must be admitted that it occurred in these succeeding days and hours.

There are a great many things that words cannot describe: joy and pain are two of them.

The poverty of language is very conspicuous here. The haggard face, the deep lines, the ghastly eye, the hollow cheeks, all tell more eloquently of racking pain than mere words can do. The most of these days his sufferings were so far beyond endurance that his ordinary moaning and groaning would burst into such screams that he could be heard at a great distance; these spasms would often be followed by long spells of unconsciousness. Think of the nervous shock he must have felt when, one morning, while removing the bandages, his nose and part of his mouth fell into his mother's hands, and he found his face in the awfully disfigured condition it is in at the present day! This dreadful loss was a hard blow to him, and he was so shaken up that for some time he began to think that "to die would be gain." The case was intensified when he began to apprehend the possibility of the other frozen parts going the same way.

Through this mortal agony the sufferer writhed under these throes of pain from November 29th, 1871, to January 27th, 1872, a period of sixty days. Many of his precious hopes had flown, and he was rapidly being convinced that he could not save his limbs. Three great witnesses agreed: pain, the physician, and

death itself; for long ere this mortification had set in, and the skin was black; indeed, the flesh was so dead and rotten that he had to be moved on a sheet to prevent it from falling off. No anesthetics or opiates were used during all these days, and it was a gallant fight between life and death. Finally Dr. Turner was again called out from Winn and after administering chloroform, amputated his two hands and the right foot. There were a few neighbors who witnessed the operation, all of whom had shown much kindness and displayed very great sympathy for the sufferer; they were Samuel Kennedy, John Nelson Kennedy, and a native of the country by the name of James Stevenson.

When these three limbs were amputated, the doctor said it was useless to proceed, for his vitality was so low "his life was not worth a penny." During the night the poor fellow revived, and the doctor took off the other foot, which left him the shapeless and limbless creature you see in the cut in the frontispiece.

## CHAPTER VII.

### *CONVALESCENCE.*

"Hope reigns eternal in the human breast;
Man never is, but always to be blest."
—*Pope.*

FINLAY'S pain was now practically over. When the dead parts were removed the system had a rest from the hopeless conflict, and the waste of strength was stopped. By the fifteenth of March he was able to sit up; but eating and drinking were tasks more impossible to him than to an infant in the crib. Here, as in all human history, his ministering angel was—mother. She had been to the rescue at every turn, so far, and now it seemed that her son was to be thrown back upon her care, as helpless as when he was first placed upon her knee.

It required no effort to revive the mother's love and care. Unlike the aged tree that hardens and dries up, the aged mother keeps her tender affections alive long after her hair has changed its color and her step has shortened. No wonder Coleridge said: "There is none

in all this hollow world, no fount of deep, strong, dauntless love, save that within a mother's heart."

Every true and loyal boy willingly "falls in" when that old chorus is raised on the battlefield:

> "Then break the news to mother,
> And tell her that I love her;
> Just say there is no other
> Near half so dear to me."

With as much tenderness and patience as when he was a babe his mother dressed, fed and bathed him day after day. While this tedious process was going on, Finlay was considering more seriously than ever the dismal outlook for such a helpless cripple, and began to wonder what suicide would be like. It is always one thing to think of suicide and quite another thing to commit it. There was too much real manly courage about Finlay to give up in such hopeless despair, so he began to consider the alternative—helping himself. He decided that these stubs must do something for the rest of the body, and immediately set them to work to convey a cup of tea to his mouth. This was the first attempt at independence, and if several successive failures had daunted him,

he would have been found to-day sitting at the knees of some nurse, being fed with a spoon. The first few trials at self-help would have amused an onlooker. His stubs had not been skilled in the principles of mechanics, and he never was an expert at fine balancing, and for a while he succeeded in depositing the tea everywhere but in his mouth. Reward followed perseverance, and it was not long before he could serve himself to tea and successfully feed himself.

Finlay was now moving about on his knees with surprising alacrity. It was about this time when an incident occurred which, in itself, was not very significant, but which served to open up to his mind greater possibilities. A flock of prairie chickens had lighted on a tree near by the old log stable. For the information of those outside our own province we might say that it is only during the time of the first frosts and snow that these birds light on any high object except the grain shocks, their habits being rather to drop into the long grass or scrub to evade their pursuer. Two objects are thus gained by the instinct of these birds: first, they are hidden by the cover; and second, they are so near the color of their cover that they can scarcely be distinguished from the grass. These

stables of earlier days must have a special mention here, for even in Manitoba very few of them are remaining to-day. At each end of these buildings the logs were allowed to protrude beyond the walls. The reason for this Grecian style of architecture we are not able to give here.

Finlay overheard one of his sisters say she would like to have one of those chickens for dinner, and he at once began to measure his possibilities of manipulating the old gun so as to procure game for dinner. There was no other man about, but, knowing that the gun was always kept loaded, he thought he could manage to hold it *dead* on the bird if one of the girls would pull the trigger. He chose one of those protruding logs for a rest, and the whole scheme was carried out with remarkable success, for the chicken, most likely from the shock of the explosion, expired soon after at the foot of the tree.

This feat was as great a surprise to Finlay himself as to anyone else, but it so encouraged the young Nimrod that he at once invented a contrivance by which he was able to pull the trigger himself, and soon became one of the best shots in the settlement. In fact, it was not long till the attention of the Government

was drawn to the fact that the prairie chickens throughout the province were being rapidly extinguished.

As yet our hero had no other means of locomotion than merely shuffling about on his knees. Finlay's misfortune had become pretty widely known now, and some of his old acquaintances in Winnipeg presented his case to some of the prosperous citizens, and the consequence was that Rev. Dr. Young, Methodist missionary; J. H. Ashdown, wholesale and retail hardware dealer, and Mr. McDougall, of the Queen's Hotel, opened a subscription list, and secured sufficient funds to purchase a pair of artificial limbs for him.

"I imagined," says Finlay, "that those artificial limbs ought to know as much about walking as my own limbs that I lost." Of course, he thought they should have been tested as to their *running* power in the same way that a "traction engine" is tested before it is sent out from the shops. His idea, also, in adjusting them was, that the tighter they were buckled to his stumps the more likely the new legs would be impressed with the fact that they were to be a part of the limb, and do exactly what the old ones did. He also imagined that when he sent his orders down to "go," the new

limbs would "repeat" the message, and it would be a *start.* It did not work; the orders were returned from the ends of the stubs, and the feet at first would not move. It was all his mistake, as he afterwards discovered; he had not taken into consideration the question of *time,* for when he was about to stoop down to give them a little *slack,* they started off. After going up and down—mostly down—for a few minutes, they then tried the forward and backward motion, mostly the latter, until Finlay came to the conclusion that he had, by mistake, ordered a back-action pair, or else they had been made for a stage actor who always *backed* off the platform.

He says that when the backward and forward motion began, it was as if he had suddenly stepped on a belt running in the opposite direction, or like jumping off a moving train, when the novice is immediately transformed into a sort of snow-plough or turnpike shovel. He says stilt-walking and roller-skating were merely recreation exercises alongside of this new walking business. He went up and down, forward and backward and round, altogether at precisely the same moment of time. Like a bucking broncho that seems determined to com-

mit suicide rather than submit to the slavery of civilization, so those limbs were determined to either run away altogether, or break Finlay's neck, rather than to submit to be slaves to human invention and act as underpinning for humanity. Finally the unruly members were subdued, and they and their new master spent very many happy days together. For a long time, however, the new limbs were not permitted to stay in the same room as their master, and were compelled to spend the night outside. It is not exactly known why this was; one theory is that it was considered that it would improve their disposition to keep them cool at night; the other is, that it was a case of sweet revenge to play a joke on the mosquitoes.

Art cannot compete with nature in durability; the source of strength and life was wanting, and the limbs soon wore out. After six years' service they were utterly useless. Not being able to procure a new pair, our hero had to resort to the old mode of travel—walking on his knees.

Finlay thought he could earn some money and purchase a new pair. He began by assisting at the chores about home. In the fall of

1879 he made a brilliant record for himself by hiring to a farmer, Angus McLellan, for $1.00 per day to pitch sheaves. He smiles all over his face yet when he relates the story, and tells that when Mr. McLellan paid him off he said: "Well, Booth, you have earned your money."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### *ENTERPRISE.*

"Tender handed stroke a nettle,
And it stings you for your pains;
Grasp it like a man of mettle,
And it soft as silk remanis."

—*Aaron Hill.*

FOR five long years Booth moved about on his knees. In the spring of 1880 the Herd Law was introduced, compelling farmers to herd their cattle, so as to protect the unfenced crops while they were standing. This was found to be considerably cheaper and more satisfactory to the farmers than to be required to fence their enormous fields of grain; that is, it was cheaper to fence the cattle in than to fence the crops in. This was a grand opportunity for our hero. It was found to be the least expensive way to dispose of the cattle question by all the neighbors putting their stock into one bunch and hiring a man to herd them. Finlay applied for the position and got it. He at once secured his outfit—a pony at $40 and a borrowed saddle—and had a band of eighty cattle to begin with.

This was a good financial enterprise, and he was able to pay for his pony the day the note fell due.

The most of his first herd were procured from his neighbors, Messrs. Ardington and Ostrander. He had a tent, where he took his dinner. A little stool had to be carried along so he could mount his pony. This stool, however, was only needed for a brief season, as he became so expert in his work that he fed, bridled, saddled, and mounted his pony alone, and could spring from his knees anywhere off the ground and mount his steed.

Three years' herding so remunerated him that he was able to go to Ontario, where he purchased the second pair of limbs from a gentleman in Drayton for the sum of eighty dollars. These were very inferior articles and only served him a short time.

A most astounding fact in the life of the subject of this sketch belongs to the history just here. It shows the depravity of human beings and the most flagrant specimen of inhumanity to man. All names of these shameless rogues will be suppressed, but Finlay claims to have been beaten out of fifty-five dollars of his honest and hard-earned wages. It must be said for the benefit of the public that the names of

the neighbors already mentioned are of the dearest of Finlay's friends, who always gave him a helping hand.

After this second pair of limbs gave out poor Booth went on his knees again. His ambition ran a little too high, and he worked so hard that great sores were made on his knees, which necessitated his quitting work altogether or securing another pair in some way.

In 1884 he sold his pony and saddle to Mac DeMill, of Carman, for forty dollars, and again went to Ontario. This time his express purpose was to endeavor to interest an old friend of his to purchase a pair of limbs for him or loan him the money. For some reason or other his plan failed to carry, and he was reduced to sore distress—being away from home, unable to do anything for himself, and not possessing money to return. The thought of begging had often presented itself to his mind, but it was promptly dismissed. Also it had often been suggested to him that he could make a good living by selling himself to a showman or hiring to a menagerie troupe. Finlay was manly and independent—he would not beg. He was noble and honorable—he would not sell himself to be looked at; and we are penning these lines now by lamplight for

the sole purpose, and with the hope that by the use of them he may be able to live and die something better than a slave or a beggar. One other way was open to our hero, and he took it. It was by sheer determination to be independent, mixed with a little necessity, and well stirred by a bit of desperation, that he started out in this new undertaking.

He went to Port Huron, where a supply of pocket combs, court-plasters, jack-knives, etc., etc., was purchased for a small sum, and then he "took the road."

Finlay had as yet not been "tossed" about much in the world; at any rate he had not seen all phases of humanity as he was about to see them in these few succeeding months. It was now he began to see and know human nature. In his peregrinations he began to meet good and bad, high and low, tender and coarse, generous and selfish. From Port Huron he touched every town as far as Flint, then back by East Saginaw and Bay City to Detroit, thus traversing most of the southern part of the State of Michigan.

At the end of two weeks he had made sixty dollars. He was often offered liquor, but in every case refused it, and he attributes his success largely to the fact that he refused to drink

and thus squander his hard-earned money in dissipation or needless indulgences.

At one place the hotel-keeper was so moved by the helpless condition of his guest, that he called on the crowd about him thus: "All you fellows what have your hands and feet shell out here, and help this poor duffer." The response was to the extent of $14.50.

At another town, a man who had taken into his stomach more than beefsteak and apple pie, looked at Finlay for a few moments, and with a few preliminary oaths that did not reflect the least on our hero's character, said: "Well, pard, you look pretty badly broken up; you are the worst broken-up man I ever saw. Here, boys, 'chip in.'" This they all did in a very generous manner.

This trip enabled him to go back to Toronto and buy a pair of limbs from his own purse.

This life is full of climaxes, like a mountain range is full of hill-tops. One of these occurred on September 20th, 1885, while Booth was in Ontario. It was the death of his mother. This sad event brought the wanderer back to Manitoba. He now felt like a "wandering Jew." The old home was never again as it "once used to be"; mother was gone. With her in that home he had always felt that if too sorely

chased by the world, he always had a refuge. Although his few living but scattered brothers and sisters were always good to him, none could make up for the loss of his mother. A small plot of sodded earth marks the place (with a modest slab) in which her remains lie, not far from where the Boyne River carries its water along beside the overhanging oaks; and that is all the tangible remains we have of those we held so dear! Of those dear "loved and lost" ones, Mrs. Louisa Moulton says:

"The birds come back to their last year's nest,
And the wild rose nods in the lane;
And the gold in the East and the red in the West,
The sun bestirs him again.

"Ah! the birds come back to their last year's nest,
And the wild rose laughs in the lane,
But I turn to the East and I turn to the West—
*She* never comes back again."

And thus we travel on, never to meet again till we overtake them at the other shore—the meeting place of the clans.

Mr. McKee, another old neighbor, employed Finlay for a whole year just to look after his stock, and then fitted him out with a pony and saddle, and he started herding again. He stayed with his chosen profession for eight con-

secutive years. Nothing of any great importance happened during these monotonous days, and that is really the worst feature about it, for of all the professions for human exiles commend us to herding cattle on the western prairie or searching for the North Pole in a balloon. We admire nature, and love animals, and appreciate the stars and sky and air, but too much liberty and life is as bad as banishment. A man can get drunk on too much of anything. All the poetry of these things dies out when day after day, month after month, and year after year, a man sees little else than a collie dog, an ugly pony, and watches cattle fill themselves with grass, and listens to the everlasting whine of the land breezes across the boundless prairie.

Finlay did not languish altogether, which is a proof of his ability to dodge death; but during these years he did a little speculation on the side. At the end of this eight-year term he possessed quite a herd of cattle. A fourth pair of legs was required now, and he offered his herd of cattle as security for the money to make the purchase; but was not successful. His friends then appealed to the Council on his behalf, and they loaned him $40 to go to Chicago. Again a temptation came to enter

the museum there at a wage of $40 per month. This was not accepted, however, and he went to peddling again. He made his way to St. Paul, where he met Mr. Ericson, who wanted to fit him out with a pair of limbs. He resolved to return at once to Carman and sell his stock and make the purchase. He wrote to his friends as to the plan of action, and the Council took the matter up again, and ordered Mr. Frank Stewart, the clerk, to forward $130 to Mr. Ericson for a new set of limbs. Finlay offered the money back to the Council, but they refused to accept it. We wish our readers to know that whatever help Booth ever received was only to provide him with limbs, and that in only two cases out of four purchases he made.

For the last three years Finlay has been living with his niece, Mrs. Beaudry, and looking after their stock. At the present time, while these pages are being prepared, he is engaged selling silverware for the Silver Plate Company, of Windsor, Ontario.

## CHAPTER IX.

### *REMARKABLE FEATS.*

"Necessity is the mother of invention."

—*Farquhar.*

"Necessity is stronger far than art."

—*Æschylus.*

It is more than likely that our readers will do everything but question our veracity when we tell them what this handless man can do without any fixtures whatever, but simply with his bare stubs. The writer has seen him take his knife out of his pocket and open all the blades; again put a five-cent piece into his pocket and take it out. At another time stood beside him at the C. P. R. wicket in Winnipeg and saw him take his purse out of his pocket, open it, and take out his fare, $2.15, and hand it to the ticket agent.

By persons who have known him for years, and whose word is not to be questioned, we are informed that on several occasions he has acted as purser at tea-meetings, making all necessary changes with surprising rapidity.

In his present business, selling silverware, he handles his own horse, harnessing, hitching and driving, and has even learned the art of using the whip—of which, however, it is said the pony does not seem to have very much dread.

For many months at a stretch he has lived alone, cutting his shavings, kindling his fires, cooking his eggs, making his porridge, cutting his beefsteak, washing his dishes; indeed, his own neighbors say he did everything in the housekeeping line to perfection, unless it was making his bed, which he usually left to the end of the month, or, if times were hard, till the end of the season!

Joseph Johnston is the only man we know of who can do justice to the work Finlay has done at threshing machines, where he has stood at the end of the carriers putting away the straw, and above the din of the thresher has often been heard calling out: "More straw up here, please."

Our hero hangs on to an old habit, which is no credit to him or anyone else, but he claims to get a good deal of satisfaction out of it—smoking. It will be a revelation to "Old Myrtle Navy" users to know that he can cut his tobacco, fill his pipe, and take a match and light it.

Now, our wives and sisters and mothers must be prepared for a surprise when we tell them that Finlay can actually thread a needle, and has frequently sewed on his own buttons—effectually proving that as helpmates and housekeepers women are no longer a necessity, even to a man without hands or feet.

### RELIGION AND HOPE.

Finlay is a member of the Anglican Church, and a consistent Christian. He has faith in God through Jesus Christ for remission of sins and eternal life. He has a sure hope that some day he will have a perfect body with a perfect soul, and a place before the throne of God with the holy angels forever.

Who knows what unspeakable repose of soul this blessed hope must give to a man who has been so maimed for life and deprived of so many pleasures and comforts of this world? Surely we need another life to supplement this one!

"Let sickness blast, and death devour,
If Heaven must recompense our pains;
Perish the grass and fade the flower,
If firm the word of God remains."

—*Wesley.*

# "Lost Track of a Day"

## A Stricture on Seventh-Day Teaching and Sabbath Desecration

## BY R. DEZELL

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COMPRISING LECTURE ON THE PROPER DAY AND DISSERTATIONS UPON OTHER PHASES OF THE SABBATH QUESTION

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## COMMENTS

REV. J. G. SHEARER, B.A., Field Secretary of the Lord's Day Alliance of Canada, says:

"I have read with much interest 'Lost Track of a Day,' by Mr. R. Dezell. It is an argument against the position taken by our Seventh Day Adventist friends for the observance of Saturday instead of our Lord's Day as the Christian Sabbath. Their position is considered in the light of Scripture, history and science, the closing chapter dealing with practical questions on the observance of the Sabbath. On the whole, Mr. Dezell's position is sound. He writes with more than ordinary ability, and his style is popular and taking. I should be glad to see his book very widely read. It can do only good; it will do much good."

REV. WM. CAVEN, D.D., Principal of Knox College and President of the Ontario Lord's Day Alliance for a number of years, says:

"Mr. Dezell writes with much ability, and shows throughout strong power of reflection. He is original

and vigorous, and I cannot doubt that the circulation of his book will do good. He has evidently devoted a great deal of attention to the Sabbath question, and has presented several aspects of it in new and fresh lights."

REV. N. BURWASH, S.T.D., LL.D., President of Victoria University, writes:

"I have read Mr. Dezell's work through with care. He deals with the subject of the Sabbath in almost every variety of aspect, in vigorous style and cogent logic. As against the Seventh Day theory, his arguments are most conclusive. His distinction between the civil and religious obligation of the Sabbath is, I think, well made, and answers many objections. His view of Sabbath obligation is at once spiritual, and placed at the highest standard. Here and there one might be disposed to criticize or modify the position taken or the form of argument employed, especially in the exegesis of Scripture proof; but these things will scarcely detract from the popular value of a strong and racy little book."

PROFESSOR J. F. MCLAUGHLIN, Victoria University, says:

"The spirit of the writer is good; he shows himself possessed of wide information and a fund of humor, as well as of sound common sense. In some respects I think the book to be a very effective reply to the vagaries of the Seventh Day Adventists."

REV. J. SOMERVILLE, D.D., says:

"In 'Lost Track of a Day' we have a discussion of the Sabbath question which is very much needed. It gives in brief compass, and in a racy, readable form, the arguments for the Christian Sabbath, and will well repay a careful reading. This little book should have a wide circulation, for it will be the means of disseminating intelligent reasoning on a subject upon which views are not often clearly defined. The erroneous notions of the Seventh Day Adventists are being industriously spread in the community, and this discussion

is admirably adapted to counteract their erroneous teaching."

REV. A. LANGFORD, D.D., says:

"There is a freshness and originality about Mr. Dezell's book that will commend it to readers. It is just what is needed at the present hour. Even Canadians are becoming somewhat loose in their views concerning the Lord's Day. I sincerely hope that this excellent book may find its way into the homes of the people."

COMMENDED BY THE ALLIANCE.

At the meeting of the Executive Board of the Ontario Lord's Day Alliance, Dec. 30th, 1902, Rev. T. Albert Moore, Secretary, introduced the book and brought up the subject of its distribution. Of its reception he writes the author: "Many kind words were spoken of your book, and both its argument and presentation were warmly commended. It was also hoped that you might succeed in placing in the hands of our Ontario people your whole edition at an early date, because of the good that must follow its circulation."

108 pp. Paper cover, 15c. net, postpaid. Order of the Author, Allenford, Ont.